

THE CAPITAL OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN EUROPE: BELGRADE ON THE FRONTIER (SERHAD) CITY (1521-1789)

OSMANLI'NIN AVRUPA'DAKİ BAŞKENTİ: SERHAD ŞEHRİ BELGRAD (1521-1789)

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Abstract

Belgrade remained under the rule of many states, including Rome, Serbia, Hungary, and Bulgaria, until the Ottoman period. Since the city had long been an important crossroads, it was invaded many times. The fact that it was on the route to connect the Middle and West Europe with Asia Minor also played a key role in the invasion of Belgrade. Along with being on the way of important roads, Belgrade serves as a door for Europe. Known as the key to Europe, Belgrade could be conquered in 1521 by the Ottoman Empire although it was besieged many times. In the following years, Belgrade became one of the most strategic cities of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. Further, the city in the position of Captaincy of Danube remained significant in terms of its military, strategical and economical aspects until it was out of the Ottoman Empire's hands.

Keywords

Belgrad, Osmanlı Devleti, Sırp, Tuna, Stratejik Önem

Anahtar Kelimeler

Belgrade, the Ottoman Empire, Serb, Danube, Strategic Importance

This study is concerned with the importance of the city to the Ottoman Empire coupled with its economic and military importance, primarily using Ottoman archival documents. Although considerable research has been devoted to this topic, rather less attention has been paid to the political importance of the Belgrade City to the Ottoman Empire in the Europe. To this end, the current study specifically attempts to examine this issue.

Öz

Belgrad, Osmanlı dönemine kadar, Roma, Sırbistan, Macaristan ve Bulgaristan olmak üzere birçok devletin himayesinde kalmıştır. Şehir önemli kavşak noktaları üzerinde bulunduğu için de birçok defa istilaya uğramıştır. Bunda Orta ve Batı Avrupa ile Küçük Asya'yı birbirine bağlamasının etkisi vardır. Belgrad, önemli yolların üzerinde olmakla birlikte Avrupa'nın kapısı konumundadır. Avrupa'nın anahtarı olarak bilinen Belgrad, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu tarafından birçok defa kuşatılmasına rağmen 1521'de fethedilebilmiştir. Bu fetih sonrası Belgrad, Osmanlı Devleti'nin Balkanlar'da en önemli şehirlerinden biri haline geldi. Ayrıca, Tuna kaptanlığı pozisyonundaki şehir, Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun elinden çıkana kadar askeri, stratejik ve ekonomik yönleriyle ön planda oldu. Bu makalede, öncelikle Osmanlı arşiv belgeleri kullanılarak Belgrad'ın ekonomik, stratejik ve askeri önemi ile birlikte şehrin Osmanlı için önemi vurgulanacaktır. Daha önce bu konu da çeşitli çalışmalara yapılmışsa da Belgrad şehrinin Avrupa'daki Osmanlı açısından siyasi önemi üzerinde çok fazla durulmamıştır. Biz bu çalışmada bu yön üzerinde durmayı tercih ettik.

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INTRODUCTION

The history of Belgrade, the capital and most important city of Serbia today, dates to the Paleolithic age. It is understood from the ruins that the city was built within the old castle on the Kalemegdan Fortress. The Celts built the first fortress in the 4th century BC, after what it was called Singidun by the Romans. The city-fortress was invaded during the migration of tribes and was destroyed in 422 by the Huns and later by the Ostrogoths. The city and fortress were constructed by Justinian I (527-565) in the VI century alongside a fortification. In the same century, the Avars and Slavs conquered the city, however, the Byzantines took the city back. The city was named Belgrade in the IX century. The city, which grew under Ottoman rule, was described as "dârü'l-jihâd" by the Ottomans due to its location on the border. With the goal to distinguish the Belgrade, The Ottomans called the city as Danube Belgrade, Üngürüs Belgrade, Lower Belgrade, Semendire Belgrade, and as kilid-i memâlik-i mahrûsâtü'l-mesâlik [the key to countries whose roads are well-preserved] to demonstrate its strategic importance for the Ottoman lands (Aslantaş, 2011).

Being on major roads and routes, the Belgrade was frequently visited during Crusades and damaged by Crusaders. In the later years, it changed hands among the Serbs, Hungarians, and Bulgarians. King Stefan Dušan captured the city in 1354. The Serbian State, which entered under the Ottoman sphere of influence after the 1389 Battle of Kosovo, relocated its capital to Belgrade in 1404 (Baysun, 1993, p. 475). After the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, the Serbian rulers became vassals of the Ottoman sultans. Despot Stefan, who ruled the territory south of the Sava and Danube, i. e. the central and southeast parts of Serbia, undertook to pay annual taxes and soldiers to Turkish campaigns (Katic, 2005, p. 145). However, along with the increased Ottoman pressure, Sigismund seized Belgrade with the aim of securing the borders of Hungary and protect the Raška [Serbian] state. Later, the Hungarians gained the control over the Belgrade for nearly a century, and during this period it was used as the most significant military base in the defense of the Hungarian southern borders against Ottoman incursions (Katic, 2005, p. 145; Aslantaş, 2011, p. 16).

The Ottoman-Serbian relations entered into a new phase with the ascension of Murat II to the throne. While dealing with the Düzmece Mustafa, Murat II had been looking for an ally. For this reason, he preferred to maintain good relations with the Serbs who were under Hungarian rule. In this respect, the Serbian king was among those who came to the Ottoman palace in 1424 and signed the treaty. However, after the Serbian despot favored Hungaria in the face of the Ottoman-Hungarian disputes, Murat II acted. Therefore, Murat II. commissioned Ishak Bey in 1428 to seize the entire Serbian country. Realizing the seriousness of the situation, the Serbian king sent a large number of gifts to the Ottoman ruler and announced that he would supply his daughter. Although this marriage did not occur due to the young age of the girl, the Ottoman army withdrew from Serbia. The problem was largely resolved. However, the Ottomans were determined to take Belgrade (Eroğlu, 2017, p. 92). Because Belgrade is on the main roads connecting Eastern and Western Europe to Asia Minor countries as

well as being established on a plateau at the junction of the rivers Danube and Sava. Therefore, the city has always been a significant settlement throughout the history. Further, Belgrade is at the intersection of industrial and commercial zones and major trade routes of Europe and Asia Minor. Since it is situated on very important routes, Belgrade is seen as a gateway to Europe. In this respect, Aşıkpaşazade notes that “Belgrade is the door to Ungürüs.” (Paşazâde, 1332, p. 113).

This paper touches upon the Belgrade’s importance to the Ottoman Empire, relying on Ottoman archives and primary sources. It also attempts to highlight the political importance of the city, which serves as the provision center of the Ottoman army. In his previous article titled “*Belgrad-ı Dârü'l-Cihad*”, Selim Aslantaş mostly focuses on the conquest of the city and emphasizes the military and socio-economic dynamics of the city in the last part of the article. In her study titled “*Serbia under the Ottoman Rule*”, Tatjana Katic addresses to general administrative structure of the Serbia and Ottoman administration. While previous similar studies on the Balkans discuss Belgrade, rather less attention has been paid to Belgrade’s political importance in terms of the Ottoman history. We, therefore, in this modest article, sought to bring this topic into the forefront in order to shed light on further studies.

1. The Ottoman Conquest of Belgrade

Considered to be the key city of Europe, Belgrade was besieged by the Ottoman Empire several times. The first expedition to Belgrade was launched during the reign of Sultan Murad II in 1441 and Evrenesoğlu Ali Bey besieged Belgrade for six months. However, with reference to Oruç Beğ history sources, some historians claim that Belgrade was besieged by Bayezid I (Oruç Beğ, 2007, p. 31).

After the conquest of Istanbul, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror organized an expedition on Belgrade in 1454 to consolidate the dominance in the Balkans but failed to conquer the city. Thereupon, Mehmed the Conqueror commenced a second campaign in Serbia in 1455. Serbian forces were defeated in that campaign. A part of Belgrade territory previously controlled by Hunyadi was left to the control of Serbian Despot George Brankovic (Afyoncu, 2006, p. 353; Eroğlu, 2017, p. 98). Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror launched the third Serbian expedition in 1456 in order to capture Belgrade and annex the Serbian Principality, which started from the southern suburbs of the city, into the Ottoman Empire. Mehmed the Conqueror initiated this campaign with 150.000 soldiers, 300 cannons and 200 pieces of feet moving in Danube. Although it was not known where Mehmed the Conqueror started his campaign on, European countries, Germany and Italy estimating that such a large quantity of forces could only be directed to Hungary, sent sixty thousand voluntary soldiers to Belgrade. Further, John Hunyadi, Hungarian national hero, penetrated into Belgrade with a large Hungarian force. Although the Ottoman army made three big attacks during the siege, it could not succeed. Rumelia governor Karaca Pasha and Janissary Agha Hasan Aga were martyred during the siege. From the enemy side, Hunyadi János and Pope’s representative Giovanni Capistrano were seriously wounded and after a short while both died (Baysun, 1993, p. 476; Eroğlu, 2017, p. 99). During the reign of Bayezid II in 1492, it was once again attempted to conquer Belgrade. When the commander of the

Belgrade Fortress agreed to relinquish the fortress to the Ottomans, Bayezid II even came to Sofa. However, the Hungarian commander did not keep his promise. Afterwards, Bayezid II moved toward Albania to suppress some uprisings. In the meantime, he commissioned Semendire Sancak Beyi [Governor] Hadım Süleyman Pasha for Belgrade siege. The siege was not successful yet (Aslantaş, 2011, p. 22; Kemal, 1997, p. 126).

When Suleiman the Magnificent acceded to the throne, many other contemporary states of the Ottoman Empire sent their ambassadors whereby they congratulated him upon his accession to the throne. Hungary did not send an ambassador and even refused to pay taxes. Furthermore, the Ottoman ambassador Behrâm Çavuş was murdered by Serbia. Subsequently, he launched his first campaign on Belgrade which was the door to Europe and lock of Hungary. In those times, Belgrade was like a castle of Hungarian Kingdom extending into Turkish territories (Dernschwam, 1987, p. 357; Itzkowitz, 1972, p. 34). The distance between the city and Ottoman borders was around twenty kilometers. In the southeast of the city, the former center of Serbian Kingdom, Semendire, which was a banner allied with Rumelia Governorship, was located. Completing the preparations for the campaign swiftly, Suleiman the Magnificent left Istanbul on May 18, 1521, and arrived in Edirne two days later. He arrived in Sofa on June 16. The army arrived in Niš on June 27. Meanwhile, Semendire Sancakbeyi Sultanzâde Gâzi Hüsrev kept all the roads to the city of Belgrade. One Thousand janissaries were sent to support Husrev Bey's raiders and cavalrymen. Rumelia governor Ahmed Pasha came to the frontiers of Sabcz which was also called Böğürdelen by Turks. Turkish army commanded by Suleiman the Magnificent conquered Böğürdelen Castle on July 7. On July 12, Ghazi Hüsrev Bey conquered Zemlin Castle. Thus, relation between Belgrade and Hungary was cut in the north. The construction of Sava Bridge was completed in nine days and the main part of the army started to go across the other side on July 18. When Suleiman the Magnificent came to frontiers of Belgrade, he sent Anatolian and Rumelia soldiers and raiders to the three sides of the castle in addition to preparations made. After preparations were complete, the army attacked and the city surrendered on August 29, 1521 (Jelavich, 1983, p. 34; Faroqhi, 2011, p. 34; İnalçık, 1988, p. 35).

Upon the surrender of Belgrade, Suleiman the Magnificent made a big ceremony and entered the city on Friday with a sermon addressed to his name in Friday prayer. After staying 19 days in Belgrade, Suleiman the Magnificent assigned Sultanzâde Gâzi Bali Bey as the protector of the city and left the city on September 18. In the meantime, some of the residents of the city were sent to Istanbul. Those were placed around the places called Belgrade Forest and Belgrade Door (Baysun, 1993, p. 477; Uzunçarşılı, 1995, p. 310). Suleiman the Magnificent made great efforts for the city not to be damaged during his conquest of the city. Some travelers of the reign wrote about this fact that Belgrade was not damaged with a lot of gun fires during the conquest of the city by Turks (Dernschwam, 1987, p. 356).

Upon the conquest of Belgrade which was at the junction of the rivers Danube and Sava, Hungarian plain was accessible for Turks. Belgrade's fall was greeted with

sadness in Europe since Belgrade was seen as one of the impossible strongholds of the Christian world to be conquered. Upon taking Belgrade, Turks won an important victory over Venice which was the most important enemy of Turks in Balkans as Venice was able use Papal institution and Eastern and Western European states for its own sake by following a balance policy for many years. Upon the conquest of Belgrade, an agreement was made with Venice in 1521. Venetians were obliged to sign this agreement to avoid or delay an attack from Ottoman Empire. However, Ottomans, by signing this agreement, were planning to make Venice, which had a powerful navy, remain neutral on a campaign on Rhodes (Heywood, 2002, p. 230; Ural, 2006, p. 14).

2. Belgrade under the Ottoman system

The Ottoman Administration Serbia under Ottoman rule was divided into *sancaks*, military and administrative units. These consisted of *nahiyes*, small territorial units, which usually reflected pre-Ottoman administrative divisions and geographical realities. The number and size of the *sancaks* and *nahiyes* could be changed for fiscal, strategic, or other reasons. The central part of Serbia, south of the Sava and the Danube, was divided into three *sancaks*: Smederevo, Kruševac and Vučitrn (Katic, 2005, p. 146). Following the conquer of Belgrade by the Suleiman the Magnificent, Belgrade was assigned to Yahya Paşa-zâde Bali Bey with the Sanjak of Smederevo. Until the conquest of Buda in 1541, Belgrade was one of the most important cities for Ottoman Empire in the West. After the conquest of Buda, Belgrade was centralized as a district of Buda (Todorov, 1983, p. 26). Although ruled by governors assigned from the center, Belgrade had an autonomous structure. Therefore, the Serbs were content with the administration during the period of Ottoman rule. The Ottoman Empire chose the timar holders from local families in the region, especially in the Balkans under Ottoman rule, thereby ensuring their loyalty to the state. New social status of these families was obtained by acceptance of the service in the Ottoman army. Consequently, the most relevant social change in the regions where the Serbs lived under the Ottoman rule was the disappearance of the highly ranked Serbian noble families and beginning of creation of the new Serbian "elite" which was not of the noble origin. Most families of the Serbian medieval noblemen escaped to Hungary immediately after or even prior to the Ottoman conquest; those who stayed, either converted to Islam or had been lost in the wider social milieu of the Serbian people (Miljkovic, 2009, p. 132). Although the Ottoman Empire had brought a new religion to the geography, it had not pursued a policy of Islamization in any way. The rights of the Christian community were guaranteed protection from the state. We could better understand it looking at the change and transformation phases of the Serbs during the period in which they struggled for independence under the leadership of local administrators since the first half of the century. This is because Serbian people had the right to voice in local governance, military, and policy within their community status under the Ottoman sovereignty. During this period, many families participated in the Ottoman Timar System. However, after the 1830s, we see that they lost their rights and the whole administrative rights and their rights to speak passed to Belgrade and the local

administrators appointed by Belgrade. (Jelavich, 1983, p. 211-243; İnalçık, 2014, p. 208; Katic, 2005, p. 157).

In the XVI century which was the heyday of the Ottoman Empire, Belgrade had its most glorious period. The city also became one of the most important cities of Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. Further, it was among the best cities in Europe. The city maintained its importance and reputation until it was separated from Ottoman Empire, since Ottoman Empire, while ruling Belgrade and Serbia, freed people from their chores and expanded religious autonomy further. It tried to rule in a way that peasants and city dwellers could be satisfied. The people of Belgrade must have been quite satisfied with this rule that no uprisings stemming from people took place in the city and Serbia. Catholic pressure on Belgrade and Serbia were prevented thanks to Ottoman Empire. Around the middle of the XV century, Sokullu Mehmed Pasha helped Serbs recover from Greek influence by reviving Serbian Orthodox Church in Peć whereby Ottoman Empire helped Serbs living in Belgrade protect their religious and national identities (Afyoncu, 2006, p. 354).

Belgrade was a very important city in terms of military and strategic point of view as well as commerce. Danube Captainship had a market consisting of six caravansaries, twenty-one inns, and 3700 stores in this city which was a very central one in the XVII century. Evliya Çelebi depicts the city and its castle as a country that all the kings yearn for. Evliya Çelebi starts his episode titled Belgrade Castle with the words “this pearl castle”. He focuses on the city being the center of the throne and its peculiarity in terms of naming the city (Çelebi, 2010, p. 497).

Belgrade was as important as İstanbul and Bursa during the Ottoman period and the city continued to be important for many years. At the same time, commercial and military road between Belgrade and Istanbul was always open and secure and maintained its importance (Jelavich, 1983, p. 97; İnalçık, 1988, p. 136-146). After the conquest of the Belgrade, the Ottoman Empire showed great effort for economic development. To attract the qualified population to the city, newly arrived residents were exempt from various taxes (Aslantaş, 2011, p. 31).

Belgrade was almost like the capital of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. The city always felt the privileges of this situation. Belgrade also had the privileges of Turkish rule after the beginning of Ottoman rule. The army used to come to Belgrade, the safest city, when it launched campaign. Likewise, Ottoman soldiers were accommodated upon their return from inner Europe. For example, Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent passed away during the conquest of Zigetvar and his body was brought to Belgrade where funeral prayers were made in the place called Hünkâr Hill. State officials paid their homage to Selim II (Baysun, 1993, p. 478). During these ceremonies, the capital city had the chance to experience the atmosphere which Istanbul had always experienced before.

The most important place for Ottoman Sultans in Europe was Belgrade. This situation continued until Belgrade’s autonomy was declared. Mehmed III, during his campaign to Hungary on August 9, 1596, decided about Eğri campaign in here and was accommodated in this city on his return. Belgrade witnesses a lot of pashas finding

their prospects thanks to this peculiar feature of the city. Apart from Sultans, many pashas visited this city during campaigns. Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha, during his besiege of Vienna in 1683, came to Belgrade with Prince Mehmed IV and sent Sancak-ı Şerif to grand vizier from here. The ceremony held in here was one of the last glorious ceremonies that the city experienced. The throne was given to Mustafa II and Ahmed III later. Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha, who was seen off from Belgrade gloriously, retreated firstly to Buda and then Belgrade after the defeat. Belgrade witnessed the capital punishment of Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Pasha who was accepted to be one of the best statesmen of the period (Ağa, 1928, p. 90).

Belgrade was a constant target of both Europeans and Ottomans. While the Ottoman Empire was fighting with the crusader forces following the second Ottoman siege of Vienna, Austrians occupied Belgrade immediately upon Suleiman II's enthronement (Raşid, 1282, p. 50). After Belgrade fell into the hands of Austria, the Muslims in Belgrade had to leave the city. The rest of Muslims were killed by the Austrians on the outskirts of the city. Soon afterwards Koprulu Fazil Mustafa Pasha captured back Nis and Belgrade from Austria again (Raşid, 1282, p. 130; Baysun, 1993, p. 480).

With the peace settlement following the Treaty of Karlowitz agreement, Belgrade and its environs experienced a peaceful period. However, both parties understood the period of peace was temporary. Therefore, both the Ottoman side and the Austrian side waited for a suitable opportunity to attack. For this purpose, Danube Captain Mustafa Captain and the umera were ordered to prepare for an expedition to take revenge on Venice on December 18, 1715 (BOA, C. HR, 16/756) In fact, prior to the implementation of this provision, the Ottoman Empire already declared war on Venice on December 8, 1714. Austria, on the other hand, considered this case as a violation of the stipulations of the Karlowitz treaty. Following the Ottoman attacks, the Ottoman-Austro war took place. After the Ottoman army was defeated by the Austrian army in front of Varadin, Prince Eugene moved to Belgrade with a strong army. Then, he launched a sudden attack against the Ottoman army before sunrise on 16 August 1717. The Ottoman army suffered difficulties caused by the fog at sunrise over the skyline. Crimean soldiers could not come to support as well. Under the command of the defeated Halil Pasha, the Ottoman army dropped weights and retreated to Nis. The Ottomans losses totaled 15,000- 20,000 and the Austrian army lost more than 6,000 soldiers. The Belgrade fortress was conceded two days after the defeat on the condition that it was to be evacuated within three days. The Muslim people evacuated the city. Prince Eugene entered the city on August 22. Belgrade was left to the administration of Austria with the Treaty of Passarowitz (Aksan, 2007, p. 102; Baysun, 1993, 480). Some of the residents, local infantry and cavalry garrison troops were also deployed to the fortress for the defense of Vidin (BOA, C. AS, 1129/27862).

Although the Austrians made some administrative changes after their occupation of the city in 1718, they continued to carry out the Ottoman model. Over 20-years of Austrian invasion of Belgrade (1718-1739), Austria, not surprisingly, was unable to lead the administration effectively. The Austria assigned the Austrians to the senior

level positions in the administration and the Serbs to the lower-level positions. The *nahiye* unit, a significant administrative unit in the Balkans and Serbian cities, was given to the administration of an official called *oborknez*. The duty of local administrators was to collect taxes, secure order in the region and establish justice as implemented in the Ottoman period (Miljkovic, 2009, p. 133; Jelavich, 1983, p. 93).

The people in Belgrade were satisfied with the Ottoman rule. For this reason, they were not very content with the fact that the Austrian administration took the control of the city. This is because the Austrians failed in administrating the city. Yet, a new arrangement was made to erase the traces of Ottoman Empire in the city. To this end, Belgrade and Timișoara were declared as the capital cities. Serbian regions under Austrian rule were divided into 15 administrative units. As previously mentioned above, the senior levels of the administration were given to the Austrians and the lower-level positions were given to the Serbs. In the meantime, we can posit that some changes were made in the structure of the city. German craftsmen were replaced by Turkish arts and craftsmen. The people were forced to convert to Catholicism (Jelavich, 1983, p. 93).

The Austrian capture of Belgrade was not an acceptable situation for the Ottoman Empire, as Belgrade was of vital importance in terms of the Ottoman sovereignty in the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire sought out opportunities to take back Belgrade. The preparations for the recapture of the city began in the spring of 1739 (BOA, AE. SMHD. I, 19/1141; BOA, C. AS, 178/7753) and during the reign of Sultan Mahmud I, Abdîpaşazâde Ali, Yeğen Mehmed, and İvaz Mehmed Pasha besieged the city. The Austrians who intended to save the city were defeated one after another. Ali Pasha decisively defeated the Austrians on July 22. The enemy dropped all their weight and fled to Vişnica. The Austrian navy had to retreat under Turkish artillery fire, abandoning some of its ships. The Austrian army lost 3000 soldiers during the battle. More than 2500 soldiers were also wounded. Hekimoğlu Ali Pasha, the governor of Bosnia, backed İvaz Mehmed Pasha, who acted on July 26, sending a force of 30,000. The fortress commander Wallis realized that he could not defend the fortress against the attacks of the Ottoman army. While the war continued, peace negotiations began between the Ottomans and the Austrians through the mediation of the French ambassador Marquis de Villeneuve. The Austrians agreed to cede the city on the condition that the fortifications they had built were to be demolished. The peace treaty was signed on September 1, 1739. Seven days later, Ali Pasha penetrated into the Belgrade. A twenty-seven-year treaty was signed between İvaz Mehmed Pasha and General Neipperg on September 18. In accordance with the treaty consisting of twenty-three articles, the Danube and Sava rivers were regarded as boundaries between two states (Jelavich, 1983, p. 94; Aksan, 2007, p. 114). The conquest of Belgrade fortress was met with great joy in the Ottoman Empire. The conquest of the fortress was celebrated with cannon fire (BOA, C. AS, 988/43125). Balyemez cannon were carried with the aim of guarding the fortress and the needs of the soldier were met (BOA, C. AS, 912/39396; 840/35858).

Although the fortresses of Nish and Vidin served the function of the Belgrade Fortress during the Austrian occupation period, the city regained its previous importance only after the Ottoman restored the control over the city with the Belgrade Agreement on September 18, 1739. A large-scale garrison consisting of 900 sipahis, 3,000 local forces and 2,400 janissaries was established to guard the Belgrade Fortress. Belgrade thus preserved its identity as a massive military base in the middle of the 18th century. In 1750, 5,039 janissaries were tasked to guard the fortress. Belgrade had been considered as the key to all Rumelia since the second half of the 18th century. As a result, every precaution was taken to preserve Belgrade (BOA, HAT, 1380/54407; BOA, C. HR, 131/6541).

Belgrade was again besieged in 1789 by the Austrian army under the command of Field Marshall Laudon. In the meantime, the Austro-Russian-Turkish War was going on. Prior to the Ottoman-Russian war in 1787-1792, Austria made considerable preparation in the field of military. In addition to that, it seems that Austria started preparations long ago (BOA, HAT, 22/1066-D). In this regard, in his official report sent to the Grand Vizierate, Belgrade Governor Mehmed Izzet Pasha acknowledged that the Austrians had been providing soldiers for a long time and requested Grand Vizierate to send soldiers and provisions to Belgrade (BOA, HAT, 12/438-A). Three or four years after this official report, Abdi Pasha, the guardian of Belgrade, Mehmed Pasha, the guardian of Vidin, Osman, the guardian of Hotin and Aleksandr, Voivode of Bogdan, submitted the following detailed information in their reports:

"...Nemçe carried out military operations everywhere, the request of urgent military support to Belgrade, Nemçe recruited two hundred thousand soldiers and Nemçe attempted to convince the Christians along the Danube coast to stand by Nemçe's side, a request to send many soldiers to Vidin. Nemçe's ongoing preparation is a sign of war and they did not let Muslims cross the border. Nemçeli penetrated into Nis, leaving Belgrade and considerable amount of provisions were stored in Nemce..." (BOA, HAT, 29/1385).

Belgrade was once again besieged after the Austrians entered the war against the Ottoman Empire on the side of Russia. The city was unable to resist the siege and surrendered in October. This is because the number of Austrian soldiers surrounding the city was around 62,000, while the number of Turkish forces in the city was around 9,000. This number was insufficient for defense of fortress and food supplies were sparse (BOA & 147/6216; BOA, C.AS, 510/21298). In the event of Ottoman-Russian war, senior officials in the region were asked to fortify the Belgrade fortress and make it ready for defense considering possible Austria's involvement in the war (BOA, C.AS, 318/13174; 1128/50070; 1119/ 49577; BOA, HAT, 23/1148). Further, Ahmed Khalifa was deemed to be responsible for the exploration of the bridges and pavements to be repaired on the road to Edirne, Sofia and Belgrade and the part between Edirne and the district of Mustafa Pasha was repaired by Mehmed Efendi, a member of Hacegan-ı Divan-ı Humayun, with an allowance of 1,640 kuruş (BOA, C.NF, 7/306; 24/1175; 51/2510; 20/986). 1,099 kuruş was also allocated for the places within the Şehirköy district (BOA, C. NF, 33/1618; 8/398). Additionally, supply of food was ensured to the

ranges between Edirne and Sofia and Sofia and Belgrade (BOA, C.AS, 889/38239; BOA, C.BLD, 17/819). Prior to the Ottoman-Austrian war, Mavroyani Nikola, Voivode of Wallachian, was issued a decree and ordered to provide enough provisions using the money to be sent from Belgrade, and to deliver them to Belgrade as soon as possible (BOA, C.MTZ, 7/1335). Despite all these measures, however, the fortress was not prepared for defense in advance (BOA, HAT, 147/6199-B). Further, the indifference and lack of leadership of the serasker Abdullah Pasha caused the fall of the Belgrade Fortress. Because the grand vizier Yusuf Pasha neglected the needs of the fortress such as ammunition and supplies. This was another important factor behind the fall of the fortress (BOA, HAT, 144/6060). Rumelia governor and Belgrade Serasker Abdi Pasha, who prevented the provisions sent from Sofia to reach Belgrade and did not reach Belgrade in time, also played a role in the fall of the fortress (BOA, HAT, 133/5509; BOA, C.AS, 652/27432). Because, considering the approaching winter conditions, Abdi Pasha was warned on November 17, 1788, and was asked to transport the necessary provisions from Nis to Belgrade with the rented horse-drawn carriage and he was asked not to leave Belgrade without ensuring provisions (BOA, C. AS, 726/30467; BOA, HAT, 1380/54381). Abdi Pasha even intended to leave the city to spend the winter in Alacahisar or Nis. When the people of Belgrade shared their discontent, the grand vizier ordered Abdi Pasha not to leave the city and to reach a mutual agreement with ümera and ocaklı (BOA, HAT, 1380/54387; 1384/54822). The central government which predicted that the Austrians would attack Belgrade and thus tried to take all necessary measures failed to act in this regard due to the neglectful behaviors of the local administrators. Further Sultan sent a hatt-ı hümayun and warned the Pasha utilizing a harsh language because of the neglectful behaviors of Abdi Pasha (BOA, HAT, 190/9170). While he was formerly assigned to guard Belgrade, Abdi Pasha was appointed as the Governor of Rumelia and the Serasker of Belgrade due to the ill-disciplined behavior of the Suleiman Fevzi Pasha, the Governor and Serasker of Rumelia (BOA, HAT, 29/1397).

The betrayal of apprentice officials, local soldiers and the military forces belonging to different divisions entrusted with the task of guarding Belgrade played an important role in the fall of Belgrade. With this in mind, the state issued a decree and a series of orders to Ahmed Pasha, the Guardian of Belgrade, on April 11, 1793 declaring that *"This rank who did not appreciate the blessings they had for a long time; failed to defend the fortress besieged already, and surrendered Nemçe by their own hands within five to ten days was deemed to betray and not even one of them would be allowed to enter the fortress , the implementation of the captaincy procedure as in Bosnia and deployment of army soldiers to the castle an ramparts"* (BOA, C.AS, 1149/51048; 976/42498; BOA, HAT, 172/7404-B). Kadi (Judge) İshakzâde Mehmed Emin Efendi was also found guilty in the fall of the fortress. For this reason, the name of the Kadi Mehmed Emin Efendi was removed from the ulema list and exiled to Bursa (BOA, HAT, 201/10282; BOA, C.ADL, 9/575). The Guardian Osman Pasha was among those who was guilty in the fall of Belgrade since he left Belgrade and came to Vidin. As a result, the decree was issued on 18 November 1789, however, Osman Pasha died from natural causes in Vidin (BOA,

HAT, 147/6216-A). Osman Pasha was granted the title of “Vizier” for his previous successes in the battle against Austria (BOA, HAT, 1384/54771).

Belgrade was again ceded to Ottoman side after the Zishtovi [1791] treaty signed following the war (BOA, C.HR, 81/4031). The fortress was badly damaged before and after the Austro invasion. The damaged fortress was repaired in a short time (BOA, C.AS, 721/30246). The Austrians even collected taxes from the reaya under various names during the invasion. Considering this situation, particularly regarding taxes, the Ottoman Empire took some measures for the relief of the public (BOA, C. DH, 220/10990). Given that the wars in 1788-89, the cost was hefty not only for the Austrian side but also for the Ottoman side. Along with economic costs of war, both sides suffered heavy losses. 33,000 out of 72,000 soldiers who were sick and wounded during the war died (Aksan, 2007, p. 114, 166).

Besides being one of the most important border cities of the Balkans, Belgrade was also significant in terms of its demographic structure. In some major settlements in the Balkans, Turks used to live in both city centers and villages. Yet, it is a little difficult to find Muslims outside the city center of Belgrade (Jelavich, 1983, p. 91, 94). Hans Dernschwam, in his work titled *Travel Log to İstanbul and Anatolia*, notes that many people living in the city center of Belgrade were Turks. Apart from Turks, he also mentions about a small number of Jewish, Serbian and Hungarian people. There were four Muslim quarters in the city in 1536. In 1560, there were 365 Muslim households in 16 quarters and 109 Christian households in 12 quarters. Muslim households increased to 600 and Christian households increased to 200 in 1572-3. At that time, there were also 133 Gypsy and 20 Jewish households in the city. Some western travelers visiting the city at that period noted that Belgrade was bigger than Buda or Nuremberg. In the XVII century, Belgrade was a big city. Petar Masarek visiting the city around 1630s wrote that the population of the city was 100.000 (Aslantaş, 2011, p. 32). The population of Belgrade was estimated to be between 60.000 and 100.000 between the late XVI century and early XVII century (Faroqhi, 2004, p. 65). Mostly, quarters were gathered around mosques. According to Evliya Çelebi, there were 17,000 households in Belgrade. The city’s population was about 98,000. According to Hans, Turks used to live in the upper parts of some villages and Serbians used to live in the lower parts of villages (Dernschwam, 1987, p. 20). Security is one of the main reasons why Muslims prefer the city center. It is difficult to come across Turkish or Muslim populations in rural areas. Albanians were intentionally settled in villages evacuated due to wars by the Ottoman administration (Katic, 2005, p. 155).

3. Turkish Artworks in Belgrade

During its rule in Belgrade, the Ottoman Empire constructed dozens or even hundreds of works including many mosques, madrasahs, masjids, libraries, turbehs, inns, hammams and bridges. However, we can only learn their names today. Further, it is even difficult to remember their names and keep their records. This is because these works were deliberately destroyed. According to Katip Çelebi, the number of artworks in Belgrade is 100. Evliya Çelebi mentions the existence of 217 mosques. We would like to highlight some of them below:

Mosques: It is known that 200-300 mosques and masjids in various sizes were built in and around Belgrade under Ottoman rule. Evliya Çelebi claims that there are 217 mosques in Belgrade. 33 of them are authorized to open on Fridays. Amongst them, only Bayraklı mosque has survived to the present day. The rest of the mosques, just as in other Ottoman works, were demolished after the end of Ottoman administration in the city.

Mosque of Sultan Suleiman: It was built after the conquest of Belgrade in 1521 by the Suleiman the Magnificent. However, it was destroyed in 1717 after Belgrade was conquered by the Serbs.

Mehmed Aga Mosque: This mosque is mentioned in Evliya Çelebi's travel book. It is also mentioned in the Ottoman records in 1860.

Batal Mosque: It was built in Belgrade where the National Assembly is located today.

Seyyid Hasan Mosque: This mosque was used as an armory in 1878. It was destroyed during the First World War.

Bajrakli Mosque: The mosque was built by Kethüda Hüseyin Bey. According to foundation certificate-charter, it was built in 1797-98. Following several repairs, the mosque now serves Muslims living in the region (İbrahimgil, 2004, p. 161).

Sultan Mahmud Mosque: The minaret of the mosque was destroyed in 1876. The mosque, which was used as a military hospital for a while, became unusable after the explosion of the Arsenal owing to its use as a weapon and ammunition depot. Apart from these, many more mosques were destroyed and did not survive until the present day. These are Bayram Bey Mosque, Koseki Mehmed Pasha Mosque, Yahya Pasha Mosque, Ferhad Pasha Mosque, Gazi Ahmed Pasha Mosque, Gözüüm Hacı Veli Mosque, Şehitlik Mosque, Abdülcebbar Mosque, Habil Efendi Mosque, Yahyalı Mehmed Pasha Mosque, Turgud Bey Mosque and Fethullah Pasha Mosque. (BOA, İE. EV, 10/1190; 11/1282; 14/1701; 5/533).

Madrasahs: It is known that many madrasahs belonging to the Ottoman period were built in Belgrade. However, these were destroyed by the Serbs. Evliya Çelebi points out the existence of nine darülhadis and eight madrasahs.

Hammams: Due to the importance given to cleaning, Turks built hammams in all the cities they went. 10 hammams were built in Belgrade during the Ottoman period.

Fountains: Water is one of the basic needs of people. The Ottoman Empire attempted to meet the water needs of cities and villages. To this end, many foundations were established. The safety, cleaning and maintenance of waterways are considered among the important public services. It is known that there are 20-30 fountains belonging to the Ottoman period in Belgrade.

Turbehs: It is known that there are many turbehs in Belgrade as well as other historical monuments. Yet only two of them survived to the present day.

Sheikh Mustapha's Turbeh: The Turbeh was built by the district governor Hüsnü Efendi in the name of the sheikh of the Saadi order between 1783 and 1784. Being a building with a hexagonal base and built from precisely hewn stone blocks, the turbeh

has four windows, a door and a mihrab. The interior part of the turbeh contains a sarcophagus and a gravestone with an original inscription. Many legends are told about the turbeh located in Dörtyol, Belgrade. The most common belief is that those who visit the turbeh are healed. In the 1930s, the turbeh was intended to be demolished several times. Then, this idea was abandoned after those who wanted to demolish the turbeh were wounded in various ways. The turbeh is respected by Muslims and Christian Serbs and is often visited.

Damat Ali Pasha's Turbeh: The Turbeh of Damat Ali-Pasha, the conqueror of the Peloponnese peninsula, is situated in the Upper Town of the Belgrade fortress. Damat Ali Pasha was martyred in the battle of Petrovaradin in 1716 and was buried into the tomb built on behalf of his name. The tomb suffered damages during World War I and was repaired in 1938. In 2003, it was restored by Turkish embassy in Belgrade (İbrahimgil, 2004, p. 161).

Conclusion

As a result, Belgrade, which came under Ottoman rule in the early years of the XVI century, the most glorious century of the Ottomans, experienced this magnificence for centuries. While Belgrade, which became a key city in Europe, experienced the glory of the greatest and most powerful empire in the world, it constantly faced with the Austrian threat. Belgrade was easily able to respond to these threats until the second incursion of Vienna. However, political, and economic stagnation of the Ottoman Empire following the second siege of Vienna resulted in an increased Austrian threat over the city. Belgrade was occupied by the Austrians from time to time, starting from the period after the siege of Vienna until its loss by the Ottomans. Belgrade had an untroubled and peaceful period under Ottoman rule. This is because Serbs was given the right to voice in the governance of Belgrade, which was strategically important to the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, Turkish and Muslim citizens who were intentionally settled in the region as a part of the Ottoman Empire's settlement policy also may have played a part. The Ottoman administration succeeded in keeping the Serbs and Muslims together as Ottoman citizens and allowed them to preserve their cultural identity. As in other parts of the Balkans, the Ottoman administration was successful in integrating the Serbs into the Ottoman military and political system. Nevertheless, there was also a consciousness of their Christian origin and an adherence to deeply rooted customs and beliefs.

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ANNEXES:

Picture 1: *Damat Ali Pasha's Turbeh*

Source: Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017.

Picture 2: *Sheikh Mustapha's Turbeh*

Source: Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017.

Picture 3: *Belgrade Castle*



Source: *Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017*

Picture 4: *Belgrade Castle*



Source: *Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017.*

Picture 5: *Belgrade Castle*



Source: Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017.

Picture 6: *View of the Danube from Belgrade Fortress*



Source: Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017.

Picture 7: *Kalemegdan and Belgrade Castle*



Source: Selim Hilmi Özkan, 2017.